

THE

Grave-Creek Mound:

ITS HISTORY,

AND ITS

Inscribed Stone,

WITH ITS

VINDICATION.

EXOTS HARBORZI

BY

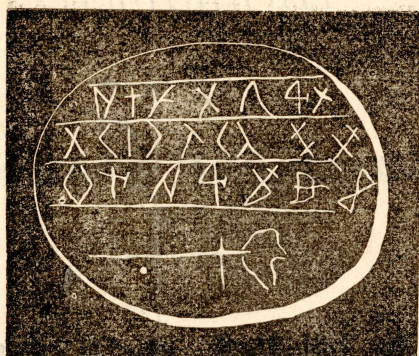
N. P. Cherry.

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INSCRIBED STONE.

COMPLIMENTS OF
P. P. CHERRY. Secretary of the
DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

INTRODUCTORY.

In preparing this work I am deeply indebted to the contributors to the pamphlet whose names appear below and in the body of the work :

COL. JAMES WHARTON,
HON. SHERWOOD CLEMENS,
A. B. TOMLINSON,
HON. W. C. HOWELLS,
DR. J. FRISSELL,
A. S. TOOD,
P. B. CATLETT,
G. S. MCFADDEN,
COL. WM. ALEXANDER,
DR. WILLS DEHASS.

I am also indebted to Capt. Wolbach and John A. Clark for favors rendered. I am also under obligation to Col. Charles Whittlesey for the loan of the cut of the inscribed stone. While gathering material for and preparing this little pamphlet for publication, I discovered apparent discrepancies between the accounts of writers on the subject; for instance, it had been stated that one of the writers had made two statements, one conflict-

ing with the other; and while some inferred that the stone was found in the lower vault, others boldly proclaimed that it was discovered in the upper vault. This is fully accounted for and explained in Col. Wharton's last letter. Again, I discovered some differences in minor details; but of this there is no wonder, considering the great length of time that has elapsed since the opening of the mound, and the fickleness of our memories; the greatest wonder is, that so many different writers so closely agree.

In casting this afloat upon the wilderness of literature, the writer has no motives for self-aggrandizement, but simply appears as the compiler of the interesting matter he has collected on the subject—matter which a large portion at least has never before been published. Whoever I may have criticized in this I hope will at least give me credit for candor and no personal ill-feelings.

The Grave-Creek Mound — Its Stone and History.

The Grave-Creek Mound is situated twelve miles below Wheeling, West Virginia, on the left bank of the Ohio River, near Moundsville, at which place is located the West Virginia Penitentiary. The mound is situated on an elevated table-land, and is an artificial truncated mound, some 70 feet high and 900 feet in circumference at its base. The mound was built by a race superior and previous to Indians, and is the most notable mound in the Ohio Valley. Speaking of it, S. D. Peet, A.M., says:

"The cubic contents of the Grave-Creek Mound are equal to the third pyramid of Mycerinus, but was heaped up by a people destitute of the knowledge of iron, and who had no domestic animals or machinery to aid them. They were evidently people like the Egyptians, ruled by some one monarch who was able to combine vast numbers in the erection of one structure, and, at the same time, able to provide them with food in abundance. The Mound-builders cultivated the soil like Egyptians, and had maize for their food, as the date and leek and onion supplied the wants of the laborers on the Nile. No Indian was ever known to toil in this manner. No government existed among the Indians that could bring them to such servitude. The authority of a chief or sachem is too slender a thread for such a people."

Buckle says of the pyramids:

"No wealth, however great, no expenditure, however lavish, could meet the expense which must have been incurred, if they had been the work of free men. It took two thousand men three years to carry a single stone from Elephantine to Sais. The canal of the Red Sea cost the lives of one hundred and twenty thousand Egyptians, and to build one of the pyramids required the labor of three hundred and sixty thousand men for twenty years."

This mound was visited by white men at a very early date, for, in 1818, one of the large trees growing on the mound bore the date of 1734, and sev-

eral names cut in the bark were yet distinguishable. Mr. A. Tomlinson, the owner of the mound, was induced —by his neighbors and friends in Wheeling—to open the mound, which he did in 1838. Mr. Tomlinson, in his tract, says:

"From the north side we excavated toward the center an adit ten feet high and seven feet wide, along the natural surface. At the distance of 111 feet we came to a vault that had been excavated in the earth before the mound was commenced: 8 feet by 12 square, and 7 feet in depth. Along each side, and across the ends, upright timbers had been placed, which supported timbers thrown across the vault as a ceiling. These timbers were covered with loose unhewn stone, common in the neighborhood. The timbers had rotted, and the stone tumbled into the vault. In this vault were two human skeletons, one of which had no ornaments. The other was surrounded by 650 ivory beads and an ivory ornament about six inches long."

A shaft was also sunk from the top of the mound to meet the other. At 34 feet above the first or bottom vault, was found another, similar to the first. In this vault was found a skeleton which had been ornamented with copper rings, plates of mica, and bone beads. Over 2000 discs cut from shells were found here. The copper rings, or bracelets, found, weighed about 17 ounces. There were also about 200 pieces of mica, and about 17 bone beads. About two feet from this skeleton was found the "Inscribed Stone." Much has been said and written about this stone, and it is the intention of the writer to submit the views and opinions of some of our most eminent archaeologists on the subject. What we want is truth, and the truth must in time prevail.

Schoolcraft, who visited the mound in 1818, speaking of it says: "It was covered with forest trees of the native growth, some of which were several feet in diameter. On ascending the flat summit of the mound I found a charming prospect around. The summit was just 50 feet across. There was a cup-shaped concavity in the

center, exciting the idea that there had been some internal sub-structure which had given way and caused the earth to cave in." Speaking about the opening of the mound, and the discovery of the stone, he continues his narrative as follows: "The occasion would not indeed have justified the high expectations which had been formed, had it not been for the discovery, in one of the vaults, of a small flat stone, of an oval form, containing an inscription in ancient characters. This inscription, which promises to throw new light on the early history of America, has not been deciphered. Copies of it have been sent abroad. It is thought by the learned at Copenhagen to be Celtiberic. It is not in their view Runic. It has apparently but one hieroglyphic, or symbolic figure. A good deal of interest clusters about this discovery of the inscribed stone. Tomlinson, the grandfather, settled on these tracts in 1772, two years before the murder of Logan's family. Large trees, as large as any in the forest, then covered the flats and mound. There stood in the depression I have mentioned, in the top of the mound, a large beech-tree, which had been visited earlier, as was shown by several names and dates cut on the bark. Among these was one of the date of 1734. This I have seen stated under Mr. Tomlinson's own hand. The place was much visited from 1770 to 1790, as was shown by newer names and dates, and, indeed, continues to be so still.

"There was standing at the time of my first visit, in 1818, on the very summit of the mound, a large dead or decayed white oak, which was cut down, it appears, about ten years afterward. On counting the cortical layers, it was ascertained to be about 500 years old. This would denote the desertion of the mound to have happened about the commencement of the 13th century. Granting to this what appears quite clear, that the inscription is of European origin, have we not evidence, in this fact, of the continent having been visited prior to the era of Columbus? Visited by whom? By a people or individuals, it may be said, who had the use of

an antique alphabet, which was much employed (although corrupted, varied and complicated by its spread), among the native priesthood of the western shores and islands of the European continent, prior to the introduction of the Roman alphabet."

Under a later date, that of 1843, the same writer, in writing for the *New York Advertiser*, speaks of the mound and its stone in the following language: "I have visited and examined seven mounds, situated within a short distance of each other. Stretching on the left, or Virginia bank of the Ohio, between the junctions of Big and Little Grave Creeks with that stream, they appear to have been connected by low earthen entrenchments, of which plain traces are still visible on some parts of the commons. They included a well, stoned up in the usual manner, which is now filled with rubbish. The summit of this plain is probably seventy-five feet above the present summer level of the Ohio. It constitutes the second bench, or rise of land, above the water. It is on this summit, and on one of the most elevated parts of it, that the great tumulus stands. It is in the shape of a broad cone, cut off at the apex, where it is some fifty feet across. This area is quite level, and commands a view of the entire plain, and of the river above and below, and the west shores of the Ohio in front. Any public transaction on this area would be visible to multitudes around it, and it has, in this respect, all the advantages of the Mexican and Yucatanese teocalli. The most interesting object of antiquarian inquiry is a small flat stone, inscribed with antique alphabetic characters, which was disclosed on the opening of the large mound. These characters are in the ancient rock alphabet, of sixteen right and acute angled single strokes, used by the Pelasgi, and other Mediterranean nations, and which is the parent of the modern Runic as well a bardic. It is now some four or five years since the completion of the excavations, so far as they have been made, and the discovery of this relic. Several copies of it soon got abroad, which differed from each

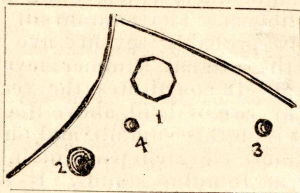
other, and it was supposed, from the original. This conjecture is true; neither the print published in the *Cincinnati Gazette*, in 1839, nor that in the *American Pioneer*, in 1843, is correct."

Below I give a communication from Col. James E. Wharton, an eye witness of the opening of the mound and the discovery of the inscribed stone:

PORTSMOUTH, O., April 7, 1876.

I will give you the full facts, with such incidental relations as bear upon it. In all I say, except in regard to the taking out of the stone, I am fully sustained by Hon. W. C. Howells, Consul-General to Canada, dated Quebec, Sept. 28, 1875.

I went to Wheeling, Va., in 1835, over forty years ago, and there edited and published a daily paper for twenty years. Although it is a long time since, as this was my first knowledge of archaeology, the circumstances are all strongly impressed on my mind. Grave Creek is on the south bank of the Ohio River, twelve miles below Wheeling, and to give you an understanding of it I send a rough sketch of the situation.



[The line on the left of the cut represents the Ohio River. That at the top is Grave Creek. No. 1 in the cut represents the fort. No. 2 is the large mound, more properly known as the Grave Creek Mound. No. 3 is the small mound in which the sculptured stone was found that was sent to the University of Virginia. No. 4 is another small mound. The valley is nearly level, surrounded by hills except the eastern ravine.]

From the fort to the mound is nearly a mile west of south; to the smaller mound, about a mile south of east. The fort contained, as I remember, about five acres, was an exact octagon, with bastions at the angles, and evidently by a skillful engineer, for defense. The large mound was about seventy-five feet high, by three hundred in diameter. On the top was a fallen tree about three feet in diameter, which had evidently been decaying one hundred years. There were large trees also growing on the surface. The mound and a large tract of land were owned by Abelaide Tomlinson, a man of but moderate capacity and little culture, but honest, and he was urged by neighbors and persons in Wheeling to open the mound; and some money was given to aid him. They commenced by an entry on the north side, and subsequently by a shaft from the top. Learning of this, Dr. Morton, of Philadelphia, then preparing his work on *Crania Americana*, wrote to Dr. Clemens, of Wheeling, requesting him to visit the mound and report. He ascertained the day the workmen would reach the center, and went down. I accompanied him, by his invitation. There was no one present but about 20 citizens of Grave Creek, the laborers, Dr. Clemens, and myself.

In the forenoon they struck the center of the vault, and brought out decayed wood, stones,

rings, beads, mica, and bones—one skull, nearly perfect, found in Morton's work. Among this dirt was brought out the inscribed stone, and picked up by one of us from the loose dirt. A fraud was impossible. There was no one present who would have done so if he could, or could if he would, while its whole appearance proved its age. After the stone was examined, Mr. Tomlinson handed it carelessly to Dr. Ganns, who had it most of the time till, in 1880, Dr. W. De Hass placed it in the Smithsonian Institute. The fact is, few of us then regarded the stone of much importance, and none of us appreciated its value as a link in the chain of evidence respecting the people and condition of those who built the mound. You will find a correct copy of that and some other matters in Mr. Schoolcraft's great work, vol. I., plate 3, page 123.

Dr. Clemens was a very careful writer, and did not finish his account of the opening for four months. In the meantime, Mr. Tomlinson had, as an afterthought, sought to make some money by opening the mound to visitors for a shilling fee. Dr. Morton looked upon the stone as a fraud, as he afterward wrote me, and omitted it with nearly all of Dr. Clemens's report.

Copies of the stone had been published, and much written upon it, when, some years after, Mr. Squier, returning to the east to publish the "Monuments of the Mississippi Valley" (of all of value in which he had cheated Dr. Davis, of Chillicothe), requested me to go with him to Grave Creek, to see the stone. We went; but it had been stolen from Dr. Ganns. Some months after, I found it and sent him a copy; but he ignored it. From these facts, other writers have done the same, who never saw the stone. Thus a falsehood has become prevalent.

Col. Whittlesey, in one of his letters to me, gave as his main reason for supposing it a fraud that the letters were partly Phœnician and partly Runic. That fact I regard as conclusive that it is genuine. Anyone attempting a fraud must have written a pure language, while all the ancient languages became corrupted by the mingling of peoples. The Israelites and the Runes had probably been many years together when they reached Grave Creek, where many of them stayed, while many other towns existed elsewhere. There are, perhaps, others living, who saw the stone taken out; but I do not know them. There are several who saw it soon after.

Turning to the sketch, you will find, between the fort and the large mound, a small one. This one Dr. Hullihen, of Wheeling, and myself spent a day in opening. It was little more than a foot high, and ten feet across; but in it we found two fibæ, some teeth, part of a skull, and some quarts of copper beads, chipped from the native copper. Some two years later, I heard of an inscribed stone taken from the large mound toward the east of the fort, in 1832, and sent to the University of Virginia. I procured a copy—found it broken at one end. I procured men and opened that mound, which was about six feet high and eighteen in diameter. We found nothing above the surface level, but a foot below, on the center of a neatly-laid circle of granite bowlders, we found the other piece of the stone—ashes, beads, bones, and one pipe. The whole stone was about 8 inches by four, and the inscription a counterpart of those in the Patent Office, brought by Mr. Stevens from Central America. On Lake Superior, in 1851, I saw two chisels of tempered copper that had been used in cutting the native copper, and beads—the counterpart of those we had found at Grave Creek. How do I read these facts? That some portion of the Hebrew tribes who used the Phœnician language, and had learned from Egypt to temper copper, wandered here with other friendly people, and scattered themselves from the lakes over the Mississippi Valley; they were annoyed by hostile tribes, built their

fortifications—the large mound for dead chiefs, the smallest for common persons, and that the eastern mound was built by hostile tribes who burned their dead and buried them below the surface; that both were ultimately conquered by a hostile race, many driven off to the south, others submitting to the conquerors, and mingling with them as did the Saxons with the Normans after the conquest of 1066. The conquerors were the ancestors of our Indians. It is known that our Indians have some of the rites and usages of the Jews of old. These mounds were not built by our Indians, but by an industrious race who were more civilized and advanced; yet in the big mound were found several pieces of mica. In a mound opened a few years ago at Cereto, W. Va., there were bones, beads, and mica found. In all the modern Indian graves I have ever seen opened, and they are many, there was a piece of mica on the breast of the body, sometimes four inches square, and a half-inch thick. This must have come from the mines of North Carolina, from which comes our mica of commerce.

Trusting that I have furnished the information required, though in a hasty manner, I remain yours, truly,
J. E. WHARTON.

In a private letter to me, under a later date, the same writer continues his narrative:

"The stone was doubtless on a shelf in Dr. Gann's office, where I saw it more than once, and was taken by some loafer and pawned for whisky at a grocery half a mile above Grave Creek. It was perhaps three months after I went down with Squier, when the groceryman called to me that he had the stone I had been hunting for, and brought it to me. I paid the 25 or 50 cents the man had pawned it for and took it back to Dr. Gann's. I presume the man knew it was stolen when he took it, and I told him so. I know it was the same stone I saw taken out, and it had not been tampered with. It is one of those things you can not mistake. Every mark on it was a thousand years old. It had been handed to Dr. Gann when it was found at the mound; afterward it was placed in a case in the mound, and later with other curiosities in Dr. Gann's office. In 1850 it was taken by Dr. Wills De Hass and sent to the Smithsonian Institute.

"The position of the second stone of which I spoke, which was found in 1832 (by whom I do not know), was sent to the University at Charlottesville, Va. Hearing of that I obtained from a professor there a copy, procured laborers, and proceeded to open that mound, and myself found the other piece. After comparing that with the stones Stevens brought from Central America, then in the Patent Office at Washington, I sent my piece to Charlottesville, that the stone might be perfect. Whether their collection was damaged by the troops during the late war I do not know. I remember something of the burning of some of the buildings."

Schoolcraft, in his work entitled "The American Indians," speaks of the stone just mentioned by Colonel Wharton, in the following language:

"Among the articles found in this cluster of mounds, the greater part are commonplace in our western mounds and town ruins. I have noticed but one which bears the character of that unique type of architecture found by Mr. Stevens and Mr. Catherwood in Central America and Yucatan. With the valuable monumental standards of comparison furnished by these gentlemen before me, it is impossible not to recognize in an ornamental stone found in one of the

lesser mounds here a specimen of similar workmanship. It is in the heavy feather-sculptured ornaments of Yucatan—the material being a wax-yellow sandstone, darkened by time."

In the *American Pioneer*, published in 1843, Mr. Levering comments upon the stone in the following manner:

"In examining a work relating to the chirography of the ancient Britons, I was astonished and gratified to discover a striking similarity between the fac-simile of their style of writing and that found at Grave Creek. The ancient Britons cut their alphabet upon a stick with a knife which, thus inscribed, they call 'billet of signs of the Bards,' or the Bardic alphabet. Compositions and memorials were registered in this way on long narrow boards, several of these being connected together, forming a connected composition. Although there are but a few characters on the flat stone of Grave Creek, several of that few exactly resemble the stick book of the ancient Britons."

Below we give a communication received from the Hon. W. C. Howells, Consul-General to Canada:

UNITED STATES CONSULATE,
QUEBEC, April 26, 1876.

P. P. CHERRY, Esq., Wadsworth, O.:

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your note of the 10th inst., asking me for my views of the genuineness of the engraved stone found, or said to be found on opening the famous mound at Grave Creek, W. Va., I can only give you qualified views. Till within a few years, in common with many who take an interest in the Mound-Builder question, I believed this stone to have been found in the mound along with the other articles there found, when it was opened by Mr. Tomlinson, and that it then bore the characters with which it was marked. In 1839 I visited the mound, which had then been opened some time, and was fitted up for the reception of visitors, who paid 25 cents for admission to the interior, which had been built up with brickwork so as to form a chamber at the center of the foundation of it, where the skeletons and other relics found when it was opened were arranged so as to form a kind of museum. The man in charge seemed to be ordinarily intelligent, and familiar with the general history of the mound and its opening. He made no parade of this stone, and showed it along with the beads, etc. I handled it and scrutinized it as well as I could by two dimly burning candles, for the vault was otherwise dark. It appeared to be a piece of thinly stratified sandstone, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, water-worn, so as to give it a nearly oval form, and to make the surface tolerably smooth. There was a small desk in the vault, on which was kept a book for registering the names of visitors, and the relics were kept in this desk. At my request he gave me a loose piece of paper out of the book, on which I made a copy of the inscription. That copy I have either lost or given away. Many copies have been made and published that I have recognized as correct, and which have differed very slightly. In the library of the Historical Society of this city I found a copy in an English work on the Pre-historic man, which I will transcribe for you. It is said to have been made from an impression on wax. I should say it is correct. Mr. John S. Williams, in his *American Pioneer*, published in Cincinnati in 1844 or '45, gives an account of the opening of the mound, by Mr. Tomlinson, to which I would refer you. It is a very simple and straightforward narrative, apparently free from any fraudulent purpose.

In a conversation I had with Col. C. Whittlesey on this subject a few years ago, I found him

firmly set in the belief that this and the engraved stone, said to have been found in Licking county, were both frauds. I could not accept his unbelief, though he affected me with doubts. From my knowledge of the community near Grave Creek, I have always felt pretty sure that there was nobody in that region capable of making the inscription on this stone who was sufficiently dishonest to commit such a fraud. It might have been done for a trick, to hoax some enthusiastic antiquarian, or the like; but in that case somebody would have been invited to share the fun, and in time it would have leaked out. That Mr. Tomlinson, or anyone interested, had it made to draw visitors to the museum, I regard as the least probable of theories; for he was not the man to do so; and then, he never "made a run" on the engraved stone. The Licking-county stone was found by an eccentric man who likely had a theory on hand, and unfortunately the inscription was in Hebrew! Mr. Tomlinson was not eccentric, and had no theory. The mound was on lands that he inherited, and wanted to improve the place. He certainly did lose money on it.

Of the actual identity of this stone with the contents of the mound, I regard James E. Wharton, Esq., of Man field, O., as the best witness. He was present when the stone was found, and knew the persons present with him. Of this he published a statement in the *Cleveland Herald*, last September. To him for one I refer you. In his article in the *Herald* he refers to Dr. Hulihan, of Wheeling, who was cognizant of the finding of the stone. Dr. H. was an exceedingly sharp and sarcastic fellow, who would have been only too well pleased to expose a fraud of the kind, and quite as ready to suspect any trickery. The fact that G. W. Clemens, in corresponding with Dr. Morton, of Philadelphia, about the crania of the mound, does not refer to the stone—that has been cited in proof of a fraud—would not affect my confidence in its genuineness, for the doctor was writing about skulls, and I doubt if he thought of anything else; or if there had been readable tabl^s found there, and they said nothing about crania, it is questionable if he would have referred to them.

I think the evidence favors the genuineness of this stone, or the inscription on it; and if it be genuine it will stand alone as the only lettered relic of the mounds. But even then it is of little value in any point of view, since it is isolated from all other literature to which it might possibly have belonged. It tells no story, even if it could be deciphered. If we could read it, it would disclose no secrets of the mysterious prison-house of the Mound-Builders' history. The most that can be drawn from it is a conjectural date of the era of the mound, or a period when some Indian chief used them for a burial place. I incline to think the stone may be proved to be genuine, and possibly might cast a ray of light upon the subject in question. But I incline to adopt the French proverb: "Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle." Respectfully yours,

W. C. HOWELLS.

The next communication is from the pen of Peter B. Catlett, a resident of Moundsville, Va., a living witness of the opening of the mound and the discovery of the inscribed stone. His letter is particularly valuable from the fact that he is the second living witness of the discovery, he in fact being the first man that saw and picked it up. But we will

let him tell his story in his own quaint style.

Mr. P. P. CHERRY:

MAY 6, 1876.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter was received, and contents noted. In the first place, I will say that I have been living in this place sixty-three years, and I know all about the mound alluded to from that date. In answer to the question, "Were you present at the opening of the mound?" I will say that I was, and helped to do the work. Question: "Is there any other person or persons living at or near your place?" Answer: There are none. In answer to the third question, I will say that there was a stone in the mound that had engraving on it. One side was filled with engraving, and about half filled on the other. I was the man who found the stone. In answer to the question, "Was there a matrix, or, in other words, an impression of the stone where it lay?" I would say that the engraved stone was found in the inside of a stone arch that was found in the middle of the mound, and in that stone arch was found a skeleton that measured seven feet and four inches. When the bones were placed upon wires, I took the lower jawbone, and put it over my chin, and it did not touch my face, and I was at that time a man who weighed 181. There were beside this skeleton some thousand of ivory beads, and five copper rings, 2½ inches in diameter, and about the thickness of a crayon pencil, and a lot of other things, such as stone axes manufactured out of sandstone, but very neatly done. In regard to the nature of the soil all I can say is that the whole of the mound is mixed with charcoal and bones, and on the top of the stone arch was found a skeleton of common size, and at the side of it there was charcoal the size of a man's fist. From the appearance of the coals, and the quantity of them, it was intended to burn the skeleton, but was extinguished before it was burnt. In the stone arch alluded to there was no mechanical work. It was twenty-two feet in diameter, and we took the stone out, and put a frame in its place, and plastered it. AS FOR ANYONE PLACING THE INSCRIBED STONE THERE, IT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN DONE. We found that the other stone arch had a common-sized skeleton and but very few trinkets in it. There are a great many other things that are connected with this mound that have slipped my memory, and I am so nervous that I can not write. I owned a square lot about the center of the town, that had two small mounds. They were about twenty feet high, and sixty feet in diameter. They were of coarse sand, and I made use of them for laying brick. There were some trinkets in them, such as darts and tubes. The tubes were about fifteen inches long, and about one inch in diameter. They were made of some kind of cement. They were neatly made, and as smooth as glass on the outside. I gave them to a man who came from New York, who belonged to the antiquarian society, and the version that he gave of them was that they were used as breathing-tubes in times of danger, by hiding themselves in water. Col. Wm. Alexander tells me that his wife has a copy of the diary of her grandfather, old Joseph Tomlinson, the man who first settled in this country, and who owned the mound. I believe I have said all that is necessary to your questions. Hoping to hear from you again, I remain yours,

P. B. CATLETT,

Moundsville, W. Va.

The following letters are respectfully submitted in the cause of the truth, and show why Dr. Clemens has been maligned, and the true reason

why Dr. Morton did not publish an account of the Grave Creek stone. Under ordinary circumstances, I would not publish them, but every art and device has been brought to bear to prove the Grave Creek stone a forgery and Mr. Tomlinson and Dr. Clemens guilty of *Punica fides*.

The first and second letters following are from the Hon. Sherrard Clemens, of St. Louis, from whose eloquent lips fell the burning, scathing words of warning, in the halls of Congress, in 1861.

WHEELING, May 4, 1876.

DEAR SIR:—I have received your letter, directed to me in St. Louis. My father's papers are here. I will try to find the original report to Dr. Morton. My father complained very bitterly of the discredit Dr. M. threw on the sculptured, or inscribed, stone found by him in the mound at Grave Creek, and ignored by the doctor in his "Americana." He demanded the return of his manuscript, and my impression is that he received it. I have seen the stone myself, as have hundreds of others, at Wheeling, W. Va., and Moundsville. A copy, or fac-simile, was printed in the Wheeling "Times," soon after the discovery. The fact of its existence is as undeniable as the opening of the mound itself; and I presume it will not be difficult to prove all the facts by living witnesses.

Some correspondence took place between Dr. Morton and my father in regard to the discredit with which the stone was received; and, if I can find the correspondence, I will send it to you.

SHERARD CLEMENS.

WHEELING, May 18, 1876.

DEAR SIR:—I was called here from St. Louis by the death of my sister. It seems rather providential that, under your call, I can vindicate the sacred shade of her father and mine, in regard to the inscribed stone found in the Grave Creek mound.

I sent you yesterday a letter from Dr. Frissel, of this city, giving his ideas of the character of Dr. Morton. I have found the abstract of what I suppose was the original communication from my father to him. The relative characters of the two men come into relation to each other, in regard to this controversy. The circumstances which led to the acquaintance between my father and Dr. Morton were as follow: Thomas Johnson, of this city, was born with club feet. His father was wealthy, and he desired to have an operation performed to cure the defect. My father accompanied Mr. J. to Philadelphia, and remained until he recovered sufficiently to return to Wheeling. Dr. Morton, with the intense vanity and arrogant opiativeness of himself and his endowments, in which nobody ever concurred but himself, took to himself the whole credit of the operation—although I know, from the declaration of Mr. Johnson to me, that my father was of the utmost importance to him, not only in the actual result, but before it. So in regard to the inscribed stone. When my father, after months of labor, and through his influence with Mr. Tomlinson, of Grave Creek, had the mound opened, and, after long exertions in the midst of professional and pressing duties, prepared his report for Mr. Morton, he ignored all parts of the same which did not square with his preconceived opinions in regard to his theory of "Crania Americana," and therefore suppressed all my father said in regard to the inscribed

stone. My father's manuscripts are very voluminous, and I was engaged all day yesterday in the examination of them. I will continue the search to-day, and until I leave here for St. Louis.

SHERARD CLEMENS.

DR. CLEMENS'S MANUSCRIPT.

"The great mound, situate on the flats of Grave Creek, Marshall county, Virginia, was opened and examined by myself and Abelard Tomlinson, grandson of A. Tomlinson, who came to the flats in 1771. Abelard Tomlinson was assisted in the workings by Thomas Biggs and such other persons as could be hired during the month of March, 1838. The examination was commenced on the north side of the mound, four feet above a trench which surrounded it. From this point they made a horizontal opening—or tunnel—about ten feet high, which was afterward arched with brick, and continued it until it reached the center of the mound. This opening, or tunnel, was 7 feet wide and 10 feet high. After going 10 or 12 feet from where the work commenced, the original surface of the earth appeared. It was covered by a stratum of bluish-looking earth, varying from 1 to 1½ inches thick. This bluish stratum had an inclination upward of about 15 degrees, and can now be very distinctly seen by any one visiting the mound.

When going 5 or 6 feet further toward the center, blue bunches of earth were observed above this blue streak, but none below it. These blue bunches were of an oval shape, and varied in size from 6 to 10 inches. At first they were scattering, but, as the center of the mound was approached, they became more numerous, so as nearly to touch one another. These blue bunches contained pieces of charcoal and bits of burned bone. On the breaking up of these bunches, no traces of leaves, stalks, weeds, or any other burned vegetable remains could be observed. But in the yellow and brownish loam sand, or earth, used to fill up between these blue bunches, the impressions of leaves with the stems attached to them, as well as the stalks of weeds and blades of grass—some lying the same way, and others crosswise, as if bruised together. They could be very distinctly seen.

These impressions of leaves were of the oak and the beech, but the most perfect were those of the *polamonium reptans*, or Greek valerian, which grows plentifully around the base of the mound. These impressions were found frequently in the whole of the excavations, as well in the one through the center as the one made 28 or 30 feet above the base of the mound.

In carrying this horizontal opening inward, an appearance was observed, showing that when the mound was small, say 60 paces at the base, a covered passway, inclined ten or fifteen degrees downward from the north to the base of the vault. The traces of its existence were indubitable. This passway was originally covered with timber. The impression of the bark in the earth could and can still be seen distinctly. This passway was in a measure filled up by the timbers giving way, and the earth from above falling. The timbers were, from the impression left in the earth, originally from four to five inches in diameter.

The direction of this covered passway agreed with the direction of the horizontal tunnel, or excavation, made under the direction of Mr. Tomlinson—save that the natural passway had an inclination from above downward to the base of the vault, which could be distinctly seen after the vault was reached and cleaned out. Distinct and unequivocal evidences of this passway can now be seen by any persons curious to visit the mound.

* * * * *

In this vault a large skeleton was found, with a necklace composed of perforated shells, two copper bracelets, and a curiously inscribed, or hieroglyphic stone, the characters of which are distinctly traced in parallel lines. These curiosities were all found together, near the skeleton. The stone is now in my possession, and I have had an exact fac-simile of it taken. The characters are perfectly copied, and it may, if ever deciphered, reveal something which to science is not now known. Abelard Tomlinson, Thomas Biggs, myself, and others were present when the stone was discovered with the copper brace-

lets and the shell necklace. I retained the stone for the purpose of sending it to some scientific person, for the purpose of having it solved or explained."

I hereby certify that the foregoing is an exact copy of my father's manuscript in regard to the subject to which it relates.

SHERARD CLEMENS.

Wheeling, Va., May 13, 1876.

The following letter is the one mentioned by the Hon. Sherrard Clemens in his second letter:

MR. CLEMENS,—

DEAR SIR:—In answer to your note, I would say, what I remember is that your father spent nearly two weeks at Moundsville in collecting the material for his paper—that he spent much time for several weeks in writing up the history of the mound, fortifications, etc., about the place. He often read portions of the paper to me, so that I was, at that time, familiar with the whole subject. He took great pains to have his account of the Indian relics full and accurate. He sent his paper, and I do not remember what else, to Dr. Morton, in Philadelphia. He expected Morton would publish most of the paper, but he made only a short and unsatisfactory notice of it. Your father was not pleased with the way Dr. Morton treated his paper. The manner in which Dr. Morton passed over so large a section of the most important information in regard to Indian antiquities made an unfavorable impression upon me in regard to the man. I came to the conclusion, from what I saw of his work, and learned of him after it was published, that he was a vain man of large pretensions, and with only very moderate capacity. This work, so far as I know, attracted attention, and gained notoriety mainly before it was published. It was talked of much before publication, but never much after. I am sure that your father sent to Dr. Morton everything he could gather up on that subject, for he was doing his best to do him a great favor. I am sorry I can not remember more, but I have hardly thought of the subject since 1838.

JOHN FRISSELL.

The next letter is introduced to show what the leading men of Wheeling think about the matter.

WHEELING, June 6, 1876.

MR. P. P. CHERRY,—

DEAR SIR:—Your letter to J. C. Huff, containing a letter from S. Clemens, Esq., was by the former transferred to me. I can only say to you that, soon after the mound at Moundsville was opened I visited it, and was shown an inscribed tablet of stone by the proprietor, said to have been taken from the mound during the opening. Many other articles were with it, said to have been found during the same excavation, and I never entertained a suspicion that there was any fraud in any way connected with it, nor do I now. I have a cast of it, and my faith in its genuineness is undoubted. I have no reasons to doubt it.

A. S. TODD.

As the vindication of Dr. Clemens seems to be complete, we now introduce a letter from A. B. Tomlinson, the man who opened the mound, and who is yet able to speak in his own

vindication, and in a manner that must bring conviction.

FOLSOM, Sacramento Co. Cal., Aug. 3, 1876.

SIR:—Yours of April 9 has just come to hand, in which you inform me that I am charged with having fraudulently produced the inscribed stone that I found in the mound at Grave Creek. Sir, I will in the presence of God, before whom I must expect shortly to appear, being now 68 years old, give the event of my finding it, according to my recollection, which is clear and distinct, although 38 years have elapsed since the event. There had been two vaults in the center of the mound. This stone was found in the upper vault, which was about 30 feet, perpendicularly, above the bottom of the lower vault. Each vault had been supported by timbers or rude stones. On the floor, and under the confused mass of rock, were found all the relics of each vault. I was engaged in removing the rocks of the upper vault, and at the same time gathering the relics. The relics lay confusedly, commencing near the east wall, and promiscuously inclined to the center of the vault. Being thus engaged, and near the side of the vault, the stone spoken of was found. I removed it with my own hands, as I supposed from its ancient bed, believing it to be a genuine antiquity. I have entertained that belief as firmly as I believed that the accompanying beads and bracelets were of ancient origin; and, if it was even possible that the stone was fraudulently imposed upon me, it was no less a foul slander to impute it to those interested in the enterprise.

A. B. TOMLINSON.

The first doubt was cast by Dr. Morton's refusing to make mention of the stone. The reason of this has been clearly explained. The next doubt, and the largest stumbling-block, is the course taken by E. G. Squires. The cause of this is also fully explained. Dr. Wills DeHass says that it was in a fit of pique against Mr. Schoolcraft, while no doubt the greatest cause was his not being able to find the stone when he sought it, consequently he ignored it when found, jumping at the conclusion that there was something underhanded about it, but Mr. Squires has withdrawn his objections, and admitted the authenticity of the stone; are not his followers generous enough to admit that the bottom has fallen out of their pail?

The next gentleman falling into the errors and prejudices of his predecessors, is Mr. Foster, who was inclined to rather overdo the matter by perpetuating a falsehood to the effect that the stone was not produced until two years after the mound was opened. This is so palpably false that it needs no comment.

Next comes Col. Chas. Whittlesey, whom I regard as an able-headed, candid and cautious investigator, but

I have no doubt but that Col. W.'s first doubts came from the above sources, and consequently that perhaps his investigation of this subject has not been entirely free from prejudice, as the wish is often father of the thought. I do not think that Col. W. could by any means be influenced to willingly and knowingly perpetuate a wrong; but human nature is often imperceptibly leavened with prejudice; a person whose sensibilities are so tender that he is continually in fear that a fraud will be inflicted upon the public, will sometimes go to the opposite extreme, and regard a tangible truth as an untruth unless backed up by the most incontestible evidence.

Whether this is so in the case of Col. W., I do not know, but he has frequently asked for the man who saw the stone in the mound, and I take great pleasure in presenting him, believing the man's statement true, as he had no cause to mis-state it. Thus you see the mistakes of a few have been perpetuated by succeeding writers, until the stone is regarded by many who have not given this subject an earnest investigation, as a fraud. As a general thing, our scientific men are too willing to rely on the word of some predecessor whom they regard as authority, and consequently do not use the powers they possess to investigate for themselves. This is wrong, and we should take no man's say-so if we are able to prove it ourselves. I regarded this stone as a fraud, but was led to investigate, and the more I investigated the clearer did I see the truth, until I am firm in the conviction that the stone and its inscription are authentic and of great antiquity. Another argument which has been used against this stone is that there has been other inscribed stones found, which have been proved frauds. This is no argument against the stone in question, but rather for it, as this was the first production of the mounds in the line of inscribed stones. The conception is the most difficult, but after an idea has been conceived, imitators become plenty. Before the false prophets came the true prophet. Neither are the differences found in the many (said to be)

correct engravings of the stone an argument against it, as the fault lay in the draughtsmen and in the engravers, not in the stone. The stone remains, and is capable of demonstrating the fact to those who are skeptical.

Dr. Wills DeHass, in a letter to me under date of Aug. 7, 1877, says:

"Quibbles have been raised by ignorant and presumptuous writers as to the authenticity of its discovery, but there is now no question as to the genuineness of inscription, or to the existence of the huge tumuli from which it was taken. E. G. Squires never took the trouble to inquire whether the tablet was genuine or not, beyond some doubt, and attempted to discredit the discovery in a fit of pique against Mr. Schoolcraft, toward whom he cherished personal animosity. Certain novices in archaeology, and one or two careless writers on prehistoric America, have taken E. G. S. as authority, and marred their works by recording his mischievous notions on the subject. * * *

The Grave Creek inscription was carefully described in a paper which I read before the American Ethnological Society, N. Y., Feb., 1858, at which meeting Mr. Squires was present, and took back all of his objections, moving in conclusion a vote of thanks for the value of the contribution. His few followers have not been candid enough to do the same. I have repeatedly, in lectures and in various contributions to the press, affirmed the genuineness of the Grave Creek inscription. I may say in this connection, that no investigator, whose opinions are worth noticing, doubts the genuineness of the inscription. * Col. Whittlesey does not exactly repudiate, but inclines to doubt. I am sorry for this, as I regard him as an earnest, cautious investigator. The tablet forms part of my large and valuable collection."

In the last tract issued by Col. Whittlesey on Archaeological Frauds, Col. Wharton was placed in the position of telling two stories, but in the following letter he fully vindicates himself, and explains any apparent discrepancies that may exist. Col. Whittlesey must have been misled

about the authorship of the article in question.

PORTSMOUTH, O., AUG. 31, 1877.

DEAR SIR:—I did not write for the Pioneer in 1843; Mr. Abelarde Tomlinson did. He states as Mr. Whittlesey says—I do not remember, not having seen it for a number of years—that it was taken from the upper crypt, or grave. I have never stated that it came from the lower grave. I have never described the place from which it came in any private letter to him, and in all my public statements, have simply said that it was brought out with other matter from the drift. A drift was run in from the north side of the mound, high enough for the tallest man to walk after it was arched with brick, say eight feet high. This was run to the center, where they came to decayed wood which was evidently put up in a square box, or enclosure. A shaft was sunk from the top till they struck the same evidences. Then Dr. Clemens was sent for to see it opened, and report, and took me down to witness it. Grave Creek was a small and scattered village, twelve miles below Wheeling. The workmen went on taking out the debris, or grave-dirt, and wheeling it out for inspection. After looking at the work, I spent most of the time in hunting amongst the dirt, as did most of the others. Dr. Clemens and Tomlinson, perhaps others, occasionally went into the drift, but did not stay long as they were in the way of the workmen. As the lower grave was taken out the dirt gradually fell, until at last the whole came down, opening a communication between the shaft and drift. This dirt was all removed and showed two separate graves, similarly enclosed, one having been above the other, and I think, some feet apart. Whether the stone was taken from the lower or upper grave, I do not remember, and have never stated, even in the publication I made in the Wheeling Times, so far as I remember, because I did not regard it as of much importance. I simply know it came out with the debris through the drift, as there was no dirt taken from the shaft that day, nor could it have been wheeled down the steep side of the mound. I presume Tomlinson found it as he states, in the upper or fallen grave, or enclosure. Mr. T. seemed to regard it as of little importance compared with bones, mica, beads, and spear heads, and no one else seems to except Dr. Clemens, while I looked at it as curious, but presumed other specimens of the kind had been, or would be found, and so they will, when other mounds are properly opened. As to the stone having been a genuine relic, there can be no more question than of the light of day. No one who saw it doubted it. There is an unmistakable difference that no sensible man can mistake. A man who could be deceived, I would not trust to buy a common hatchet, for he could not distinguish between cast iron and wrought steel. A stone must be handled to cut it as that was. The handling makes it darker, and fills the incrustices in the sand stone. This is changed, and the sand resumes its natural color, by long lying in the earth. Nothing else will do it. The form of making the letters in ancient times can never be imitated. The very corruption of the language which Mr. W. regards as evidence of fraud is strong evidence of its genuine character. A fraud would have been made in Phœnician as we know it. Mr. W.'s most ridiculous effort is in his half dozen engravings showing the different copies made by tyros in drawing. One might as well contend that there was no Washington because an attempted likeness had been a thousand times daubed on country signboards. The cut by Schoolcraft is the only true one.

Yours truly,

J. E. WHARTON.

THE PRESENT.

The following letter is from G. S. McFadden, the present owner of the Grave Creek mound. It will be found full of information, and of a very interesting nature.

MOUNDVILLE, W. VA., APR. 14, '76.

P. P. CHERRY:

SIR:—A description of the stone has been published in Wills DeHass's history of the western borders; there has nothing new developed. To give you some idea of the mound and its surroundings, there are several small ones in the valley, not of any importance, all having been plowed over but the mound. It stands back from the Ohio River one third of a mile, and is supposed to have occupied, at an early day, the center of our valley, which contains six thousand acres of the most productive land on the Ohio River. Our town bears the name of Mound. I believe that in 1867 the Legislature of our State consolidated Elizabethtown and Moundville, both being called Moundville now. We have a population of about 2500, two steam grist-mills, one rolling-mill, the West Va. Agricultural Works and the Penitentiary, with one of the best graded schools in the state. Excuse my digression—to the mound again: The base of the mound covers an acre in surface, and was as round as could be made (without turning.) The elevation is now 75 feet, and about 7 feet in diameter at the top. The sides are covered with forest trees of seventeen varieties, all of thrifty growth except one large black oak which stands near the summit. This particular tree girths fifteen feet and four inches, a very straight body, and thirty feet to the first limb. When I came to this part of the country, nineteen years ago, it was thought by the old settlers that this vast pile of earth had been carried from a certain locality known as the basin. The basin, as it is called, was formed by a very short bend in the Little Grave Creek. My theory is that the mound as it now stands is a monster tomb, where thousands have been cremated. The mass as it stands is a pile of human bones, ashes and charcoal, all of which can be seen at any time. I

became the proprietor of the mound over two years ago, and since that time, or shortly after, the old theory exploded about the dirt being carried from the basin. The substance of the mound and the earth of the basin are about as much alike as coal cinders and rotten tanb rk. The Board of Directors of the West Va. Penitentiary talk of purchasing the mound for the purpose of putting a basin on the top to supply the prison with water. The property should really belong to the State, and be beautified for a pleasure ground. There are now very few stone hatchets, hammers, arrow-heads or what is termed Indian relics, to be found in this vicinity. My wife is still able to hold on to a few beads (bone) that were strung on copper wire, around the neck of the large skeleton which was found in the shaft thirty feet from the top of the mound. Dr. Ganns has passed to the other shore. He died suddenly in the Union army. Dr. Clemens has also gone. The names of some of the old settlers are Captain David Roberts (quite old), and Peter B. Catlett; he did the brick work, and helped to excavate the mound, and I believe it was he who found that stone. He is over sixty years of age.

I am yours, etc., G. S. McFADDEN.

THE PAST.

MOUNDVILLE, W. VA., JUNE 23, '76.

MR. P. P. CHERRY:

DEAR SIR:—My wife's grandfather came here in the year 1770, and located his land and built a cabin. He left the cabin in the care of Con O'Neal, and returned to Allegheny county, Maryland, where he married Elizabeth Harklas. He and his wife came here in 1772. While he was gone O'Neal killed turkeys, the feathers of which made them their first bed. He first discovered the mound in the west. He was out hunting and killed a deer south of the mound, and in coming home he found it. He then brought his wife and they went to the top of it. The ground on which it stands is called the flats of Grave Creek. It was covered with large trees, and the timber on the flats was very thick so you could not discern

the mound till you were close to it. The land and mound, under the will of Joseph Tomlinson, were left to his son Jessie, in the year 1837 or 1838. Jessie, and A. B. Tomlinson, a grand-

son of Joseph, opened the mound. There was a large oak-tree standing on the center of the mound which they had to remove.

WM. ALEXANDER.

